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HOME

From the top

The penthouse of a gaudy new Sha Tin development was stripped of its fittings and given a subtle, tasteful renovation.

Text Charmaine Chan / Pictures Jonathan Wong / Styling David Roden

Visitors to the Kans' penthouse in Sha Tin may recoil at the glitz in the shared lobby of the residential development, where gold, marble, mirrors and chandeliers – the usual signifiers of wealth in this city – are employed to maximum, albeit taste-minimising, effect.

But enter the top-floor apartment and you understand why the family of four decided instantly that they should live here. "Once I saw the light I loved it," says K.Y. Kan, a businessman with an office nearby. "I immediately had lots of ideas about what to do with the place."

A two-level, 4,000 sq ft penthouse with a private pool on the roof and a long, open living area fronted by glass balcony doors along its entire width,

the new property countered ideas Kan and his wife had about buying a house rather than an apartment.

"This is better for security reasons, management and convenience," she says, adding that their 12-year-old daughter and 10-year-old son love the pool.

To introduce low-key elegance to the interiors, the couple sought the help of Bugs Design Consultants, which toned down its retro-chic style to give the home a modern-classical look with touches of subtle, timeless glamour.

The most dramatic change is visible in the master bedroom. Capitalising on the 14-foot-high ceiling, George Lam of Bugs Design raised the floor about two feet, to the bottom of the windows of the external wall. Light streaming through a huge expanse of glass now makes the

room feel like an eyrie. "And it's still a decent height," says Lam, who also had wardrobes installed at the back of the room, fronted by a dressing table and more storage space, on the other side of which is the bed.

On top of the shared bedhead/wall, and elsewhere in the penthouse, including at the entrance, is a simple pattern of rectangular shapes created from a network of black, metal bars. This understated style continues into the en-suite bathroom. "The Kans couldn't accept any of the original fittings," says Lam. "There was a lot of gold – it was ridiculous."

Recognising how wasteful it was to junk the unwanted fittings, especially as much of them were new, Bugs returned salvageable items to the development's management office. And where they >>

1 Living room The bright space features a dining area at one end and a lounge at the other. The Cassina sofas (HK\$173,800 for the one by the balcony; HK\$248,200 for the one facing the television) came from Anterra Collection (The Ellipsis, 5 Blue Pool Road, Happy Valley, tel: 2577 5716). The Walter Knoll chair (far right) was HK\$21,010 from Salotto (29/F, Two Chinachem Exchange Square, 338 King's Road, North Point, tel: 2898 9777). The television console was designed by Bugs Design Consultants (4/F, Asian House, 1 Hennessy Road, Wan Chai, tel: 2866 0279) and built for HK\$12,000 by New Fortune Decoration (contact Peter Yeung, tel: 9340 6696). The colourful pouffes cost HK\$600 to HK\$1,000 each from Inside (12/F, Horizon Plaza, 2 Lee Wing Street, Ap Lei Chau, tel: 2873 1795) and the Pebble coffee tables (HK\$48,100 each) were from Ligne Roset (16 Blue Pool Road, tel: 2891 0913). The rug (HK\$38,000) was from Kitchens + Interiors (1/F, Ruttonjee Centre, 11 Duddell Street, Central tel: 2810 0646).

2 Dining area Hanging above the Molteni & C dining table (HK\$204,080) from the Louvre Gallery (LG/F, Ruttonjee Centre, tel: 2526 8400) is a Moooi pendant lamp (HK\$18,400) from Design Link (1/F, Ruttonjee Centre, tel: 2868 0991). The Cassina Bull chairs (HK\$14,500 each) and console (HK\$88,800) came from Anterra Collection. The HK\$5,000 clock was from Flea+Cents (1/F, 36 Queen's Road East, Wan Chai, tel: 2528 0808) and the Donna Karan Grand Coupe bowl (US\$700) was from

Neiman Marcus (400 Stanford Shopping Center, Palo Alto, California, tel: 1 650 329 3300).

3 Roof terrace The table and chairs, which cost a total of HK\$4,150, came from Yohua Leisure Furniture Factory, distributed by Zhongming International Furniture (1/F, block A, Empire Group Leong International Furniture City, 325 Highway, Leong county, Shunde, Foshan, tel: 86 757 2891 7587). The sofa set in the background was HK\$6,383 from Yibei Leisure Furniture (Lutan Industrial Zone, Wuyi county, Jinhua, Zhejiang, tel: 86 137 3895 1070).

4 Kitchen Little was done to the kitchen, apart from concealing wall tiles and installing a breakfast bench (HK\$22,000) designed by Bugs. The Kashiwa stools were HK\$4,500 each from Lane Crawford Home Store (Pacific Place, Admiralty, tel: 2118 3652).

5 Study The study-cum-games room features a Mayuhana ceiling light (HK\$6,300) designed by Toyo Ito for Yamaguchi, at Elements Lighting & Furnishings (3/F, 28 Russell Street, Causeway Bay, tel: 2295 0777). The desk, designed by Bugs, cost HK\$28,000. The chair (HK\$2,400) was from Offmax (4/F, Guardian House, 32 Oi Kwan Road, Wan Chai, tel: 2838 3830). The desk lamp was bought years ago.





could, they simply concealed the distasteful. So the kitchen, off the living area, remains much as was, although wall tiles were covered with translucent glass panels and a breakfast bench was added to the large island of appliances.

Bugs also redesigned the children's rooms so each now has an en-suite bathroom. In the smaller of the two, the boy's room, a bed was built on a platform so it lies flush with the bottom of the window. A desk along the other side of the bed maximises the space and hides a small door to a storage area beneath the plinth.

In the corridor providing access to the children's rooms is a games-cum-work room that Bugs had originally designed as a study. Simple moulding on sliding doors that open the room to the rest of the flat complements the look the owners wanted to achieve.

Vital to the overall aesthetic, however, are oak panels along an interior wall which add warmth and conceal rooms such as the guest bathroom. At one end of this oak wall are doors leading to a small courtyard with a thriving vertical garden (see *Tried + tested*) and steps up to the pool and outdoor-entertaining areas.

"In summer I spend almost every night up here," says Kan, who swims for about half an hour after dinner.

Although the top level is a popular playground, the couple say it's the living room that is the family's favourite spot. "I lie here in the evening watching TV [so much so that] the sofa has shaped itself to my body," says Kan. His wife agrees, although for different reasons. "It's colourful and cosy," she says. "And we can spend our leisure time there all together."



TRIED + TESTED

Hanging garden The vertical garden, measuring four metres by three metres, features staghorn, Boston ferns, Golden Pothos (aka Devil's Ivy) and jade plants. The wall of foliage consists of bags of plants and soil, and was created for about HK\$50,000 by Kwan Kwan Garden (Man Hing Yuen, Poon Uk Chuen Road, Lok Ma Chau, tel: 2393 4123).



6&7 Son's room The fun Uni Royal PL-EJUR-5000 wallpaper was HK\$1,200 a roll at Wallpaper Plus Interior Products (9/F, The Hennessy, 256 Hennessy Road, tel: 3525 1785). The round Muuto wall hooks, called The Dots, were HK\$1,798 for a set of five at Flea+Cents. Bugs built a platform bed with a desk (HK\$20,000 in total). The Luceplan Fortebraccio lamp was HK\$4,600 from Elements Lighting. The chair (HK\$4,980) was from Kartell (1/F, Ruttonjee Centre, tel: 2810 0408).

8 Master en-suite bathroom The Hansgrohe tap (HK\$11,967) came from Arnhold Design Boutique (1/F, Dominion Centre, 59 Queen's Road East, tel: 2529 7489). The cabinets, custom made by Bugs, cost HK\$12,000.

9 Master bedroom Oak planks (HK\$90 per square foot; Karlian, 17/F, Yue On Commercial Building, 385 Lockhart Road, Wan Chai, tel: 2388 3938) were used on the raised floor. The Wish bed by Molteni & C was HK\$106,350 from the Louvre Gallery, while the bedside tables, designed by Bugs, were HK\$12,000 each. The pair of hanging bedside lamps cost HK\$14,400 from Apartment (62 Leighton Road, Causeway Bay, tel: 2882 2198).